

Hugill and Foote Summary

The Article *Re-Reading Cultural Geography* by Peter Hugill and Kenneth Foote chronicled the changes in discipline, development, and approach in the development of Cultural Geography as compared to its predecessor *Readings in Cultural Geography* by Phillip Wagner and Marvin Mikesell (1962). Wagner and Mikesells' prior writing emphasized three concerns pertinent to the era: Cultural and Historical Processes, Spatial Dynamics, and Economic Phenomena while outlining five themes (Culture, Culture Area, Cultural Landscape, Culture History, and Cultural Ecology). Today, as pointed out by Hugill and Foote, the pertinent areas of disciplinary focus have grown to fourteen different themes and the concerns of the more modern study is easily compressed into the following three groups : "How the world looks", "How the world works" , and "What the world means".

The current focus of the cultural geographer is to "interweave a wide range of related themes". A version of this interweaving method is currently being used in Educational training programs (specifically at Kent State University) for the Integrated Social Studies discipline on a university level. The idea is to interconnect various "threads" of the broader social studies discipline into a powerful, all encompassing delivery that spans across and connects numerous concepts into one overarching theme or lesson plan as a means to promote multi-disciplinary synthesis. In a nutshell, some of the current educational training designated for high school students takes a great liberty in employing the same "methodological and philosophical pluralism" that Cultural

Geographers have utilized in the development of their discipline.

Many common themes took new roles in the evolution of Cultural Geography. Such as the rejection of “environmental determinism” as a means of understanding human behavior and the embrace of “diffusion” and “contagious diffusion” as a method of human distribution across a spatial realm. Cultural Geography also stood strong with their steadfast focus on “Macroscale” instead of evolving and adopting the transitional themes that many other related disciplines of social science opted to do during their development. Another focus that remained constant across various disciplines was the usage of “region” as a conceptual base. Instead of focusing on a specific characteristic or phenomena that took place in numerous areas and zones, the concept of region focused on all cultural characteristics and aspects within a specified area deemed a region.

As the traditional themes of Cultural Geography begin to fall out of scholarly favor, many new concepts are being explored as the future of what is now being called Cultural Geography. Some of which seem to have more in common with the disciplines of Psychology, Statistics, and Economics than with the prior emphasis on the creations of and social impacts of human interaction with the land comparatively. This development will inevitably shape and give way to entirely new schools of thought to be explored in academia. With the interweaving of different disciplinary influences and academic trends, the current focus is more permissive and accepting as to what it deems appropriately labeled and categorized under the banner of “Cultural Geography”. Regardless of the long tradition of adhering to a concrete set of guidelines and principles, the discipline of Cultural Geography is evolving and changing much the way that culture does over time. Respectively, the discipline seems to have remained steadfast in its initial focus and

ultimately employed and embraced its discovery of change over long periods of time to its own discipline.